

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 DAMASC 00535 251345Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W
-----251346Z 037058 /65

O 251257Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1447
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T DAMASCUS 0535

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR SY LE IS US
SUBJ: MOVEMENT OF SYRIAN FORCES TOWARD SOUTH LEBANON

REF: STATE 16150

1. AT MY REQUEST, FONMIN KHADDAM RECEIVED MY DEPUTY FOR MEETING AT 1300 LOCAL. (ON DOCTOR'S ORDERS I AM CONFINED TO BED FOR NEXT 2-3 DAYS WITH WRENCHED BACK.)

2. AFTER LISTENING TO DEMARCHE, KHADDAM EXPRESSED THANKS TO USG FOR SHARING WITH SYRIANS ITS APPROACH TO PRESIDENT SARKIS ON THIS MATTER (PARA 1 REFTEL). KHADDAM THEN SAID: "WE HAVE NO SPECIAL OR PRECISE INFORMATION ON THIS SUBJECT. ALL I KNOW IS THAT THE PEACEKEEPING FORCE IS NOT SYRIAN, ALTHOUGH SYRIAN TROOPS MAKE UP A LARGE PART OF IT. THE PEACEKEEPING FORCE IS UNDER THE COMMAND OF PRESIDENT SARKIS AND, THEREFORE, HE IS THE ONE TO TAKE A DECISION WHETHER TO MOVE IT IN ORDER TO BRING PEACE, SECURITY, AND STABILITY TO LEBANON." KHADDAM CONTINUED THAT THE DUTIES OF THESE FORCES, AS DEFINED BY THE RABAT AND CAIRO SUMMITS, WERE TO IMPOSE PEACE, SECURITY, AND STABILITY IN LEBANON. THEY HAVE NO OTHER
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FUNCTION.

3. KHADDAM WENT ON TO SAY THAT PRESIDENT SARKIS MIGHT HAVE MOVED UNITS TOWARD NABITAIYAH BECAUSE OF THE CHAOS PREVAILING THERE AND IN ORDER TO BRING TO AN END THE KILLING, PILFERAGE AND SABOTAGE WHICH HAVE BEEN DAILY OCCURRENCES IN THAT TOWN. SARKIS MIGHT ALSO HAVE HAD IN MIND LINKING

THE AREAS OF NABATIYAH AND BEIRUT WHICH HAVE BEEN DIS-
CONNECTED UP TO THIS TIME. BECAUSE OF THIS DISCONNECTION,
THE LEBANESE AUTHORITIES HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO ASSUME THEIR
RESPONSIBILITIES IN NABATIYAH. KHADDAM REPEATED THAT HE
HAD NO PRECISE INFORMATION AND WAS MERELY GIVING US HIS
DEDUCTIONS.

4. KHADDAM STATED HE WISHED TO AFFIRM THAT IF THERE HAD
BEEN ANY MOVEMENT OF PEACEKEEPING FORCES TOWARD NABATIYAH,
IT HAD NOT BEEN BY DECISION OF THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT. THE
SYRIAN GOVERNMENT, HE STRESSED, HAD NO INTEREST IN TAKING
ANY ACTION WHICH MIGHT PREJUDICE OR AFFECT THE SITUATION IN
THE AREA, ESPECIALLY SINCE IT WOULD SOON BE RECEIVING THE
SECRETARY WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF MOVEMENT TOWARD PEACE.
SYRIA NOT ONLY WANTS THE SECRETARY'S EFFORTS TO SUCCEED,
BUT ALSO WISHES TO PARTICIPATE CONSTRUCTIVELY IN THEM.

5. KHADDAM ASKED US TO TRANSMIT HIS REGARDS TO THE
SECRETARY AND TO SAY HE IS LOOKING FORWARD TO RECEIVING
HIM IN DAMASCUS.

6. COMMENT: WE HAVE NO REPORTS RE SECURITY SITUATION IN
NABATIYAH TO CONFIRM OR DENY KHADDAM'S DESCRIPTION PARA 3.
SHIHABI TWO WEEKS AGO, YOU WILL RECALL, DESCRIBED TO ME
A GENERALLY CALM SECURITY SCENE IN THE MARJAYOUN DISTRICT
ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT SPECIFICALLY DISCUSS NABATIYAH
(DAMASCUS 192, PARA 2).

MURPHY

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

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